

Crocker, Morgan Dall, Laura Thole, Tabatha Albers, Andria Lampe, Kalye Boeckmann, Maria Gebke, Alison Mueller, Ashley Rakers, Nicole Strieker, Samantha Bedard, Kayla Eversgerd, Alyssa Hitpas, Brooke Schulte, and Abbey Winter—on their success.

I wish the Knights continued success for seasons to come!

HONORING SATOSHI HIRAYAMA

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 19, 2008

Mr. RADANOVICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today, along with Congressman NUNES, to congratulate Satoshi "Fibber" Hirayama upon the opening and dedication of the newest gymnasium in Clovis Unified School District. Mr. Hirayama will be honored at a dedication ceremony on Thursday, October 16, 2008 at Gateway High School.

Mr. Hirayama was raised in the Central San Joaquin Valley on a farm. At the age of twelve he began to play competitive sports, mostly football and baseball. These skills were developed even further when his family, along with thousands of other Japanese-Americans, was relocated to an Internment Camp in Arizona during World War II. While in the camp an organized baseball league began with 32 teams. The competitive nature of the games is where his baseball skills became refined.

When the war ended, Mr. Hirayama and his family returned to the San Joaquin Valley. He completed high school and received a scholarship to play baseball at Fresno State College. While at Fresno State he lettered in football and baseball. He led the baseball team with seventy-six stolen bases in a season and five stolen bases in one game, this record stood for over forty years. After college he was picked up by the Stockton Ports in the Pacific Coast League, a farm team for the St. Louis Browns. Mr. Hirayama was the first Japanese-American from Fresno to play professional baseball. After one year in the league he was called to serve for the U.S. military. From 1953 to 1955, Mr. Hirayama served as a soldier at Fort Ord and continued to play baseball with fellow soldiers on base.

Upon being discharged from the military he signed with the Hiroshima Carp in the Japanese Baseball League. He and a fellow teammate, Kenshi Zenimura, were incredibly popular; over 100,000 fans showed up at the Hiroshima train station to greet the players upon their arrival to Japan. Mr. Hirayama became a two-time All Star and competed in the Japanese-Major League Baseball All Star games against legends, such as Mickey Mantel, Whitey Ford, Casey Stengel and Stan Musial.

After playing in the league for 10 years, he returned to California and in 1965 was hired as a teacher for Clovis continuation. He became vice principal at the continuation school for two periods per day and also taught 5 periods of math at Clovis High School per day. In 1970 he was promoted to principal of the continuation school and in 1972 became the first principal of the new continuation school, Gateway High. After holding that position for five years, he served as the Administrator of Personnel for Clovis Unified School District. He remained in that position for 13 years, until he retired from the district in 1990.

Today, Mr. Hirayama continues to work in the baseball world. He currently scouts for the Carps in Japan and the Dominican Republic. He is a true pioneer for the sport of baseball and an incredible example of competitiveness and determination.

Madam Speaker, I rise today to commend and congratulate Satoshi "Fibber" Hirayama upon the dedication of the new gymnasium in his name. I invite my colleagues to join me in wishing Mr. Hirayama many years of continued success.

HONORING THE LIFE OF JOE MENDOZA

HON. LYNN C. WOOLSEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 19, 2008

Ms. WOOLSEY. Madam Speaker, I rise with a heavy heart today to honor my friend Joe Mendoza, who passed away on October 25, 2008, at the age of 90. There are so many things to be said about Joe—a rancher, a community leader, and a family man who was held in high esteem by all who knew him. I can think of no better tribute than these remarks delivered at his memorial service by his long-time friend, Joseph Schoeningh:

Point Reyes is a unique geographical area on our beautiful coastline. It was there 90 years ago this past July that Joseph H. Mendoza, a truly unique man, was born. It was also there this past Saturday that he died.

Joe Mendoza (Papa Joe to many of us) was a loving husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather and uncle. He was a caring friend and neighbor, a very successful businessman, dairyman and rancher, a true outdoorsman, avid hunter and fisherman. As a husband, he deeply loved, honored and cherished his "Mrs. Scotty" for 67 wonderful years. They worked as a synchronized team to build their ranching business, becoming highly successful. Recognized by his peers for his success, Joe became President of the Challenge Cream and Butter Association, served on the board of Directors of the National Milk Association, and also was one of the original board members of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area.

As a father, he was very proud of his three children. He could be a tough and stern taskmaster at times, but he always wanted them to learn and grow from his methods and example. Son Jim shared about the time when the manure system was broken and they cleaned out the pump, then Joe put his foot over the outlet and told his young son to turn on the pump. This was a "hands on" manure shower lesson for both men . . . bet Scotty was thrilled about their entry to "her" always spotless house. . . .

Son Joe remembers the time that he and fellow young men were entered as an adult ensemble into a parade, riding horses. Their Lions Club dads stuffed the kids' shirts to make them look bigger and the boys brought home a trophy. On the way home the proud fathers decided to stop at the Western in Point Reyes Station. The same proud fathers proceeded to ride those horses into the bar.

Young Joe watched as the horses and men parted in the bar and a passing driver almost got in a wreck as she drove by seeing a horse exit the bar. We wonder did this lay the groundwork for Joe Junior's future.

Joe passed on his acumen as a business and community leader to his family. Daughter Sharon put her accounting education to work taking a part-time job when she was raising her family. She did books for Joe, Scotty and the family dairy businesses. Really this was their way to connect and Sharon was able to learn from her "hero". Sharon and Joe enjoyed talking business, talking cows and strategizing financial and political plans.

As a grandfather, the stories are numerous and wonderful. He had a manner of connecting with young people and no matter what their age, he stayed connected. Joe combined his love of Grandchildren and other pastimes at various locations from "the cabin" to his Duck Hunting Club at Grizzly Island. Granddaughter Teresa recalls their tradition that went on for ages when she accompanied Joe and Scotty to the Duck Club. Before any other task, when they arrived, Joe and Teresa would get into the boat and "cruise the Hawaiian Islands"—they were on the lookout for hula girls in that Fairfield swamp and saw many great performances as they checked on the water level and duck population. As a great grandfather of nine, he just burst with pride as he watched this latest generation sprout up and found a way to "connect" with each of them as well.

There was a special place in his heart for nephews Marvin and George Nunes whom he mentored in both businesses and life after the untimely death of their father in the early '50s.

As a hunter/gatherer, he was the organizer and leader of countless outings in pursuit of deer, ducks, doves and pheasant. Joe looked forward to every season with a new excitement and occupied most mornings calling up friends to set up their plans. He especially looked forward to the annual bird hunting trip to Mexico at the beginning of each year and was so fortunate to travel there only 6 months ago.

As a fisherman who knew the ocean around him, he brought home a wide array of fish, abalone, crab and oysters . . . Granddaughter Karen recalls a fateful day when their catch numbered 33 salmon and 1 halibut. Joe was in the company of Karen and her friend Kristy Skeen . . . he would describe them as "2 Tomatas". Of course all was good until the end of the day when the ladies retired to the kitchen of the Scotty-Joe to play cards and Joe was left on deck to clean all those fish. Of course, he graciously took on the task, never interrupting their game.

As a good friend and neighbor Joe Mendoza was a mainstay of the "point" ranches. Neighbors became friends and they were like their own family watching out for one another during crisis or time of need.

Joe was very proud, yet a very humble man, a man of much foresight and practicality. One good piece of advice he gave to many of us goes like this . . .

"If you do all of the talking, then they know everything you know and you don't know what they know."

He was also very practical about avoiding the "eye of a storm". Once he and I, at the end of a great holiday party at the cabin, decided to take a small boat across Tomales Bay to the Marshall Tavern for a final "nite cap". When Mrs. Scotty discovered that we were missing and so was the boat, she correctly surmised where we were. As Joe and I were enjoying our final nite cap the bartender